



A First for the United States: Jefferson to Face Forward on 2006 Nickel

October 5, 2005

Washington — The Nation's circulating coins have featured the profiles of presidents for nearly a century. The United States Mint is announcing that for the first time in history, the image of President Thomas Jefferson will face forward on the 2006-dated 5-cent coin (nickel). This new image, based on a Rembrandt Peale painting of Jefferson in 1800, is expected to grace the nickel for years to come. The United States Mint will launch into circulation the 2006 nickel, called "Jefferson, 1800," early next year, concluding the Westward Journey Nickel Series™.

"The changing images in the Westward Journey Nickel Series™ lead us back to Thomas Jefferson, who envisioned the Louisiana Purchase and Lewis and Clark expedition as a way to move the Nation forward," said United States Mint Acting Director David A. Lebryk. "The image of a forward-looking Jefferson is a fitting tribute to that vision."

The Lincoln one-cent coin of 1909 marked the first time the United States Mint used the image of a president on the Nation's circulating coinage. The image of President Abraham Lincoln, and other presidents on later coins, is in profile.

The forward-looking 2006 nickel obverse (heads side) was designed by United States Mint Artistic Infusion Program (AIP) artist Jamie Franki of Concord, North Carolina, using the Rembrandt Peale painting of 1800, the year Jefferson was elected President. The new nickel obverse will be sculpted by United States Mint sculptor-engraver Donna Weaver. As on the 2005 nickels, the word "Liberty" in Thomas Jefferson's own handwriting will be inscribed on the obverse.

The 1938 classic rendition of President Jefferson's Virginia home of Monticello by Felix Schlag will return to the reverse (tails side) of the 2006 nickel. However, the reverse design, "Return to Monticello," will be more detailed than Americans have seen it in recent years, having been carefully restored by United States Mint sculptor-engraver John Mercanti, using Schlag's original work. During more than 65 years of production, the United States Mint had slightly modified the reverse design for technical reasons.

Jamie Franki's forward-looking image of Thomas Jefferson was selected from 147 designs submitted by the United States Mint sculptor-engravers and AIP artists from throughout the country. Franki also designed the reverse image on the 2005 American Bison nickel.

A law passed by Congress, and approved by President Bush in April 2003, authorized the redesign of the nickel for the first time since 1938, to commemorate the bicentennials of the Louisiana Purchase and the Lewis and Clark expedition. The United States Mint's Westward Journey Nickel Series™ was the result, and the 2004 Peace Medal nickel was the first design. It went into circulation in March 2004, and the Keelboat nickel followed in August. In 2005, the United States Mint changed the nickel's obverse for the first time since 1938, incorporating a new profile image of Thomas Jefferson on the obverse and two new designs, the American Bison and Ocean in View images, on the reverse.

A panel composed of officials from the National Endowment for the Arts and the United States Mint evaluated the nickel design candidates for all of the Westward Journey Nickel Series coins, including the 2006 obverse. In the case of "Jefferson, 1800," the panel selected the 12 most promising images for the obverse, which then were submitted to the Commission of Fine Arts and the Citizens Coinage Advisory Committee for their review. The Secretary of the Treasury considered the comments and recommendations of these two panels in approving the final design. To download the design of the 2006 "Jefferson, 1800" nickel, [click here](#).

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